

The African Conquests

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The over-sea empire owed its existence to that naval organisation by which Roger had been able to shake the power of the Basileus at his own gates. The beginnings made by Guiscard of a fleet were resumed by the King, after two dukes of Apulia had left the dockyards idle. But his father before him had seen the necessity of a fleet, and both the "Great Count" and the "Great King," in the long building up of a kingdom, acted on the principle that a powerful fleet was as necessary as a feudal land-army. The providing of ships and men was insisted on in many cases as a condition of tenure, or as part of the terms made with a subjected town. Thus, in Sicily, the commune of Caltagirone had to provide every year two hundred and fifty men for service with the royal galleys; the Bishop of Lipari had a similar duty imposed on him. Amalfi, as the result of her surrender to Roger, had to place part of her fleet at his disposal, and the coast towns of Sicily and Lower Italy, to a greater or less degree, were bound to provide men and ships to the royal service. A few cities sold their ancient freedom at a price; Bari was free from naval service¹; Gaeta had only to provide two armed galleys

at demand,
which the King was to man; from
Naples no sailor
could be impressed, but if he were
willing to serve
he must be paid; the city itself was
bound to
provide one ship, to be equipped by
the King.

¹ *Cod. diplom. bar.*, p. 137, No. 80, for the terms
made with
Roger on the submission of 1132.